THE

Hindu Message

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems
from the Hindu Standpoint.

Medical Supplement

'चिकित्सितात्पुण्यतमं न किञ्चिदपि शुश्रुमः'। 'बिभेत्यल्पश्रुताद्वेदो मामयं प्रहरिष्यति'

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The following thoughtful remarks by the Superintendent of the Royapuram Medical School about extending the Medical course to five years should be of interest.

"A five year course means one of two things. The same curriculum spread over five years instead of four or an addition to the present curriculum with an extra year for study. The present curriculum and the distribution of subjects for each examination have been arrived at after several years of careful consideration and practical experience An average student can get through the course without finding it overcrowded or too great a strain on his abilities. All the really essential subjects have been included. The real difficulty is an insufficient knowledge of English as a result of which many of the students find it hard to follow what they are taught. If the course were made a five-year one and other subjects added the trouble of the students would be agrravated. The only way to make such a change beneficial would be to raise the preliminary standard. In Madras there is nothing between the secondary school-leaving certificate and the Intermediate which takes two years. It follows therefore that the course to be of any practical use would have to be a secondary one. The L. M. P. and M. B. would then be in the same footing and students would naturally prefer the status of a university degree. There would be no advantage either to the student or the State. An L. M. P. with a five-year course would naturally demand more pay and in the present financial condition of the Government and the people it would not be fair to ask District Boards and Municipalities to pay more for the sub-assistant surgeons when they can only just manage to afford the present class and find him a very useful person for the purpose."

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It is an irony fate that Dr. Laxmipathy never fails to move on wrong lines and it is rather extremely impossible to say whether this is but an accidental coincidence or a deliberate selection. As Secretary of the Reception Committee of the 13th all India Ayurvedic Conference and Exhibition he was responsible for the fixing of the date of the Conference, on a previous occasion, on the 13th April last, just on the Tamil New year's day. It is not possible that he was aware of this and yet the day was finally fixed then, which, but for the refusal of the Presidentship of the Conference by Ayurveda Martanda Pandit Jadavji Tricumji Acharya of Bombay (as the Reception Committee would have it) would have been a settled fact ; many of the Vaidyas who wished to attend as delegates to the Conference expressed their grievance, then, at such a decision (as that would have prevented them from attending the Conference altogether). And now the same mistake is again committed by the Reception Committee in fixing the dates of the Conference on 5, 6, and 7 of the August. For on these dates fall two of the most important Vaidik Karmas of the Hindus which no one but an arch reformer would dare sacrifice it for the sake of the Conference ; and yet the Reception Committee has fixed the day as such and it must take place on the fixed dates. Even now it is too late and we could not expect the reception Committee to alter the date to a future day at incalculable inconveniences to their arrangements ! !

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It is a matter for regret that the Hindu population of India, are still most conservative and have not been yet reformed thoroughly not to observe these religious functions to which an undue importance is being given ! ! Could they not forego their Upakarma and Gayatri-Japa in favour of this all India Sammelan which is now to be celebrated at this most critical juncture at a most progressive centre ? Are these more important than an academical conference as this which is to meet and dispense with few mutual admirations and tug of wars with no purpose or aim ? The Vaidyas from all India would do well therefore to attend the Sammelan rather than pay undue attention over an out-of-date, superstitious and meaningless ceremonies of these kinds ! ! !

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What we wonder at is this. How is it that the Reception Committee invariably selects a date for the sammelan which comes into conflict with one or other of the social or religious functions of the Hindus! The Reception Committee, who of course are themselves Hindus (and several of whom are Brahmans) should thus be indifferent and reckless in fixing the dates of the Sammelan is in itself a pity ? On the 4th of August falls the Varalaxmipuja and on the 7th and 8th come the Upakarma and Gayatrijapa while the dates of the Sammelan are fixed from 5th to 7th. Majority of the Vaidyas in North India who attend the Sammelan are Brahmans who would care the least to sacrifice the Religious function in favour of the Conference. The Reception Committee by itself cannot be solely responsible for these inexcusable and careless decisions and resolutions. It is the director who guides the Reception Committee that has to share the whole responsibility for these arrangements and we are sorry that Dr. Laxmipathy cannot be excused of the charge. To us it looks like a deliberate attempt of the secretary of the Reception Committee, to prevent the several willing delegates to the Conferenee from attending the same and thus minimise the attendance at the Conference ; or it must be the Doctor is indifferent or irresponsible in the cause of Ayurveda ; or that he wants to have it in his own way under his dictation and direction, with a minimum attendance.

Cancer, its Causes.

THE AND COFFEE DRINKING.
AGA KHAN'S OPINION.

Is or is not tea-drinking a danger to life in that it produces cancer?

That is the question which has been raised in the British Press and is being debated with the seriousness which characterises all such discussions when men of science take part. In this case Sir William Veno first directed attention to the menace. He pointed out that somewhere undoubtedly in the civilized mode of living—dietary, habits, and customs— is the key to the origin of the diseases. And if that be so the matter calls for immediate attenion, even at the cost of the exposure of alarming and unpalatable facts. Cancer figures, indeed, are stupendous. In Great Britain the disease claims over forty thousand victims every year. In the United States the figure is over eighty thousand. In the five years period between 1912-1918 there was a total of 1,519,964 deaths, on an average rate of 71.6 per one hundred thousand of the population of the registration countries of the world. In Africa the number of deaths was 3,018, or a rate of 33.4 In America the figures were 251,438 and 65.7 respectively, in Asia 148,447 and 54.4 in Australasia 20,335 and 73.0, and in Europe 1,096,716 and 76.6.

CIVILISED PEOPLE'S GREATER SUFFERING.

The very complete American statistics which are available for some years past says Sir William shows that the State of Massachusetts tops the list with a rate per one hundred thousand of 83.6 Rhode Island and New York coming next with rates of 82.7 and 80.4 respectively. At the bottom of the list are Montana and Kentuky with rates of 53.7 and 48.3. "Here is evidence which appears to be almost conclusive that white and highly civilised populations suffer more from the disease than semi-civilized and barbaric peoples. For these American figures are quite typical. Wherever the negro population is highest the cancer death-rate is lowest."

Lord Rayleigh who followed, pointed out that Professor J. Joly, F.R.S. of Trinity College, Dublin, some years ago, gave reasons for suspecting that the increased consumption of tea and coffee might be responsible for the increase of cancer. Lord Rayleigh added: "We have to search for something definite in civilised conditions which may account for the increase of the disease. It is not easy to believe that comfortable arm-chairs, plate-glass windows, or electric light can account for it.

PROFESSOR JOLY'S VIEW.

Professor John Joly, F, R, S, professor of geology in Trinity College, Dublin, interviewed said that he is firmly convinced that tea, coffee and red wine, are accountable to some degree for the increase in the disease, and he gave arguments in support of his remarkable theory.

He elucidated his theory by a reference to and comparison with his companion theory on the effect of excess radiative treatment on the cells of the body.

"You have taken a photograph," began Professor Joly, 'and there appears on the photographic plate a latent image, but if this plate is exposed to the light too long the latent image is destroyed. In the same way, if you expose the cells of the body tissues to radiative treatment— X-ray exposure, for instance— the first effect will be a stimulation of the cell division while if the radiative exposure is carried too far it will ultimately destroy the cells.

TEA AND COFFEE.

"There are many chemicals known as sensitisers that will have the effect of destroying what I have termed the latent image. In the absence of light they will destroy the image on the photographic plate as effectively as an over-exposure to light."

"These same chemicals will affect the cell tissues of the body in the same way and now I come to the relation of tea and coffee to the subject."

"The principal constituent in tea of all varieties as consumed in the liquid extract is tannin. This substance enters into the composition of the normal extract of tea, as consumed by tea drinkers, to the extent of from 60 to 80 per cent."

"Tannin, or gallo-tannic acid, is itself a photographic sensitiser capable of producing a latent image on a photographic plate, and I contend that it has exact of the same effect on the body cells, causing undue stimulation of the process of cell-division."

"The whole trouble with the body of a cancer victim is too rapid divison of the cells."

"Tea as an article of diet has replaced all other beverages in the light meals of the day, and it is noteworthy that the cancer statistics of this country, when compared with those for the consumption of tea show features in common. Both curves rise rapidly for several decades preceding the last, and within recent years show a somewhat less rate of increase."

"Tannin enters into the composition of coffee to the extent of 22 per cent, and is also present in red wines."

"It is said that cancer has long been prevalent in China, while in Australia, a great tea-drinking country, the cancer death rate is said to be as large as in Great Britain, and is still increasing."

SOPHISTICATED LOOKING.

On the other hand Dr. Fredrick W. Alexander, medical officer of health for Poplar, whose remarkable report on the alarming spread of cancer and its causes created a sensation some time ago disagrees, in a manner.

"There is not" he told the "Express" the slightest doubt that cancer is a direct outcome of civilisation, and what I call "sophisticated cooking." "Expert opinion is almost unanimous on that point, but there are one or two simple facts about our eating and drinking habits which cannot be too strongly emphasised.

NO HARM IN TEA ITSELF.

"I see it suggested, for example, that cancer may be caused by excessive tea drinking. It may be so, but the explanation is that tea is made with boiling water, from which the natural salts have been precipitated, and the drinking of it flushes out the vital salts which may be already in the system. There is no harm in the tea itself. The same may be said of hot coffee or hot whisky and water."

"Drink plenty of pure, cold water, and never less than two and a half pints of unboiled liquid in the course of the day."

PILL-TAKING HABIT.

"An even greater evil is the pill-taking habit. The constant use of these drugs may damage the system, and after a time larger and stronger doses have to be taken. The proper means of keeping the body healthy is by some laxatives, which are absorbed by the blood vessels.

Dr. Alexander's rules of diet include the eating of plenty of vegetables and fruit. The normal adult, he says, should eat chewing well, the skins of such

fruit as apples, pears, plums, greengages, gooseberries, and grapes. The salts become concentrated at the skins by evaporation and the most valuable part of the fruit is, therefore, the part most frequently thrown away. Meats and vegetables should be roasted or steamed not boiled, for the same reason. It is desirable to eat the skins of potatoes, however cooked.

Crude or brown sugar is better than white and wholemeal bread better than that made from white flour.

The Aga Khan's View.

Further, there is the impression of the Aga Khan, who writing to the "Times" says:—The question whether or not cancer is more particularly a disease of Western civilization is of the utmost importance, and if as a layman I venture to participate in the discussion. I do so as a warning against investigation being side-tracked without adequate consideration of facts which do not bear out such a conclusion. I have had opportunities of inquiry and personal observation in many Eastern lands as well as in the West, and I gave the matter some special study when preparing my book "India in Transition."

Middle Life and Old Age.

It is generally thought that cancer is a disease of middle life and of old age. If then, the incidence of this scourge is less noticeable in such countries as India and East and Central Africa than in those of the West the natural explanation is that in those tropic lands the attainment of advanced middle life and of old age is rare. The "simple life" in the case of the vast majority in India means hard, almost unending toil, on coarse, innutritious and often inadequate food. The man with all the appearance of a patriarch may be still in the forties. The Indian Census figures show a remarkably small percentage of people advanced in life although the tendency both from ignorance and from a desire for the respect of neighbours is greatly to overstate the actual age. But cancer is by no means unknown in India amongst the few who reach middle life. It is, however, much more noticeable in the hardier races of the Fronties and Afghanistan, as well as among the Arabs and the Persians. I think that one explanation is that, while infant mortality with them is very heavy, when the years of childhood are past men and women do survive to ages more comparable to those attained in Western lands, this being probably due to their more generous diet their hardly habits, and their outdoor life.

Tea and Coffee.

If tea-drinking has any effect in increasing liability to cancer, as Lord Rayleigh has suggested, the disease should long have been prevalent in Japan where that beverage has been generally consumed for generations, and if coffee is also a contributory cause the Bedouin Arabs should be specially liable, for they have drunk coffee for centuries.

Customs and Diet.

It should here be added that Sir William Veno has already said that "in Japan, although up to comparatively recent times the disease was almost unknown, it now claims as many victims as in England, and there seems to be little doubt that this state of affairs has arisen since the country has been "Europeanised" in customs and diet."

Coal Tar and Its Dangers.

Another light is thrown on this subject by a recent paper of Bloch and Dreifuss, which is summarized in the current issue of the "Journal of Industrial Hygiene."

Research carried out with guineapigs, rabbits, and white mice produced results similar to those of Japanese investigators. They experimented with different elements of coaltar as well as the whole tar and found what they call a "cancer-inducing point of over 300 deg. Cent. This substance is said to be effective even after distillation, "inducing in four months in a hundred per cent., extensive and rapidly growing malignant tumours."

This work was done at the dermatological clinic at Zurich, of which Bloch is chief. Earlier work was that of Ross and others in England. As the result of most patient pioneer work, which has attracted far too little attenion, they showed the cancer producing tendencies of pitch and other substances.

More recently the Home Office has made tar cancer noticeable as an industrial disease, and in 1920—the last year for which statistics are available—45 cases were recorded, with one death. Of these 33 were due to pitch, nine to tar (net fixing, repairing barges, tar distilling, purification of anthracine, gas workers), and three to paraffin. The fatal case occurred in a man employed as a staker in a gas works. Some 82 per cent, were over 40 years of age. Among fuel workers some four-fifths show formations over the age of 50. These warts may become cancerous.

The importance of all this is its bearing on the amount of tar now present in the air of all our cities, and even country districts, as the result of tar macadamization of the roads. Most of us breathe tar dust daily. Is it possible, it is asked, that this is capable of preparing the soil for cancer as rock dust certainly does prepare the soil for tuberculosis.

Still another suggestion is that the disease is due, like any others, to an organism in water. A correspondent, for instance, writes: During the last few decades there has been a progressive change in the water supply of our towns. The tendency has been to increased storage in reservoirs where there is little or no flow. May not this favour the growth of micrazoa which, when introduced into the human system, give rise to cancer."

Badly Shaped Noses.

How to straighten them.

At St. Mark's Hospital, New York, Dr. Gustav J. E. Tieck has sucessfully performed more than a thousand operations for straightening badly shaped noses. Dr. Tieck has a method of his own, which he describes in detail in a recent number of the "American Journal of Surgery" illustrating it with many photographs of unsightly noses which he had turned into at least passable and often into really beautiful noses.

"When facial disfigurement is such as to cause serious social or business embarrassment it becomes a real and potent cause of unhappiness." writes Dr. Tieck "Young women of marriageable age feel keenly the disadvantage of distorted features. Not vanity, but only deep concern and worry are at bottom the cause of most cases that come to the plastic surgeon. Their own irregularities are mirrored to them through a deceived eye.

"Among the abnormal featural derangements none caused more perturbation than the misshappen nose be it the result of injury, heredity or disease."

Mr. Tieck's method is a graft, placed in a field specially prepared for it. He has used grafts from the ribs the cartilages of the ribs, the shinbone and other parts of the body but in the majority of cases he makes use of the middle turbinate of the nose itself. He cuts it off with flat forceps being careful

not to crush it, frees it from mucous membrane and shapes it with scissors. He sterilizes it by soaking it in normal saline solution at 143 degress F. for four minutes and it is then washed by an assistant while he prepares its future resting place.

He makes an incision just within the nose running from behind forward parallel to that line where the lateral cartilage is inserted into the septum." He inserts his knife into this incision and forms a pocket under the periosteum of the triangular cartilege. Into his pocket he inserts the graft, being careful to see that it fits perfectly. He applies 3 per cent iodine to the edge of the wound, packs the nostril with sterile cotton and applies ice over the nose for twenty four hours.

This is the operation for "saddleback nose." For hook nose, it is a matter of cutting away the bone and not of grafting. The incisions are made from inside both nostrils so as to cause no disfigurement and the periosteum is lifted from the bones all the way up over the bridge. Then with saw and rasp, the bones are pared down the protruding bony and cartilaginous septum trimmed with scissors and the skin moulded into position.

In shortening the nose a triangular bit of cartilege is cut from the top through an incision made in the nostril and the wound is sutured.

Dr. Trieck says that grafts are usually firmly attached in two or three days and within three weeks it has become hard and firm. The turbinate bone, if not all cut away quickly grows again almost to its original size.

He adds the caution that fine discrimination is necessary to determine just how much bone to remove how much to insert.

The discovery of the tyhus germ by Dr. N. Kritch, the woman director of the Sokolnichersky Hespital Laboratory, is announced by Mr. Walter P. Davenport, of the American Relief Administration Medical Department, which supplied Dr. Kritch's laboratory with necessary supplies. Dr. Kritch has succeded in isolating a coccus, which is disc or biscuit-shaped. The germ was found in the brain tissue and spleen of 150 cases of typhus one hour after death. The organism was grown in media composed of a sterilised emulsion of pancreatinised spleen. Inoculation of guinea-pigs with it invariably produced the symptoms of typhus fever. No vaccine or curative serum for typhus has yet been found, but this, it is hoped, will develop from Dr. Kritch's discovery.

Thousands who have tried it say that the surest way to avoid pain and discomfort after eating is to take two or three tablets of Bisurated Magneisa after each meal. This prevents food fermentation and the resultant formation of gas and acid, and enables even the worst dyspeptic to eat almost anything without the slightest danger of distress to follow. If pain has already started, or in cases of acute indigestion, Bisurated Magnesia acts almost instantaneousty usually bringing complete relief in five or six minutes. If you want to enjoy your meals as you did in childhood get a package of Bisurated Magnesia tablets and take as directed. The chances are 100 to 1 that you'll soon be telling your friends that Bisurated Magnesia is the finest thing in the world for indigestion.

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